

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the above amendment, the claims will be 13-15.

The above amendment is responsive to points set forth in the Official Action.

Firstly, an amendment to the specification has been made to correct an obvious error in a previous amendment.

Further, a new set of claims is presented wherein the term "Bristow's method according to" is no longer recited since such recitation is unnecessary.

Claims 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiya et al. (U.S. 4,758,461) in view of Suenaga et al. (U.S. 6,133,170).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Suenaga et al. (U.S. 6,133,170) discloses a low density body such as a sheet having a density of 0.05 to 0.45 g/cm³, comprising fine fibers having a bond-reinforcing factor of at least 0.15 and curled fibers having a wet curl factor of 0.4 to 1.0 (see claim 1).

The low density sheet of Suenaga et al. may contain, in addition to the specific curled fibers and fine fibers, natural pulp fibers including mercerized pulps.

The rigidity of pulp may be increased by the chemical treatment of mercerization, and the effect of the chemically treated fibers (mercerized pulps) for reducing the density is superior to that of fibers which are not chemically treated (see col. 6, line 50 to col. 7, line 8).

Suenaga et al. also disclose that their invention provides a low density sheet having a high internal bond strength, which scarcely forms edge dust, while keeping the density thereof low (col. 2, lines 33 to 36), and that the low density paper is usable as wood-free paper, light weight coat, coated paper, base paper for a thermosensitive recording paper, base paper for a thermal transfer receiving paper, base paper for a sublimation thermal transfer receiving paper, base paper for a pressure-sensitive copying paper, base paper for metal vapor deposition, electrophotographic copying paper, etc. (col. 9, lines 17 to 26).

In view of the above, it is apparent that Suenaga et al. neither discloses nor suggests that the low density sheet containing mercerized pulps may be used as an ink jet recording paper having a high ink coloring density and a high ink absorption speed.

Akiya et al. (U.S. 4,758,461) discloses a recording paper comprising a fibrous substrate paper on the surface of which a silicon containing type pigment and a fibrous material of the substrate paper are present in a mixed state, and the recording paper has a Stockigt sizing degree ranging from 0 to 15 sec. and a basis weight ranging from 90 to 200 g/m² (claim 1).

The fibrous material constituting the substrate paper is composed mainly of wood pulp typically LBKP and NBKP, and the aqueous coating liquid comprising a silicon containing type pigment and an aqueous binder is coated on the surface of the substrate paper (col. 3, lines 58 to 65).

The recording paper of Akiya et al. contains a large amount of a silicon containing type pigment with high ink absorbing capacity in the surface layer (i.e. the coating layer) of the recording paper. Thus, the recording paper has a high probability of the ink droplets being trapped and absorbed by the pigment, and therefore feathering and diffusion of the ink can be inhibited, whereby it may be considered that dot shape is improved and also the coloring density enhanced (col. 6, lines 14 to 22).

Accordingly, in Akiya et al., the coating layer comprising a silicon containing type pigment is provided on the substrate paper in order to enhance the coloring density.

In contrast, in the ink jet recording paper of the present invention, mercerized pulp is essentially used and a predetermined liquid transfer length is defined in order to improve both ink absorptivity and coloring density. Neither Suenaga et al. nor Akiya et al., taken either alone or in combination, disclose or suggest such beneficial features of the present invention.

For the foregoing reasons, it is considered that the rejection on prior art is untenable and should be withdrawn.

No further issues remaining, allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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